# Supporting Information

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## SI Text

Global Sulfur Cycle Model. We used a widely employed global sulfur cycle box modeling approach (e.g., 1–3) to explore the dynamics and significance of the carbonate-associated sulfate (CAS) isotope record at the end of the Lomagundi excursion (LE). Gill et al. (2) and Kurtz et al. (4) recently described the modeling approach in detail, so we only provide an overview. We used the following expression to mimic the isotopic change of the global marine sulfate reservoir:

$$
\frac{\partial \delta_0}{\partial t} = \frac{F_W(\delta_W - \delta_0) - F_{py} \Delta S}{M_0}
$$

where  $M_0$  and  $\delta_0$  are the amount of sulfate S in the ocean reservoir and its isotopic composition, respectively. The input to the ocean,  $F_W$ , includes sulfur fluxes to the marine system from weathering and magmatic processes, and is assigned a single, average isotopic composition (δw).  $F_{py}$  is the pyrite burial flux and  $\Delta S$  is the mean fractionation from oceanic sulfate caused by bacterial sulfate reduction and pyrite formation. Consistent with the sulfide  $\delta^{34}S$  record (e.g., 5), we have used a lower Δ<sup>34</sup>S value than is typically used for Phanerozoic modeling work (Fig. S1), and we have assumed a constant  $\Delta^{34}$ S throughout the LE. Initial and nonvarying boundary conditions (Fig. S1) are similar to those used in Phanerozoic sulfur cycle models (e.g., 2). The one exception is that evaporate burial, which does not have a significant associated isotopic fractionation, was held below 15% of the modern flux. Estimates of marine sulfur concentrations, along with the reduced to oxidized sulfur ratio of the marine burial flux during the LE are discussed in the main text. We constructed the model using STELLA*™* modeling software and employed a forward modeling approach—varying key boundary conditions for the sulfur cycle (Fig. S2), in order to best recreate the observed sulfur isotopic profile.

We have modeled the observed rise in marine sulfate  $\delta^{34}S$ values during the falling limb of the LE. More specifically, we modeled a rise in the  $\delta^{34}$ S value of marine sulfate from approximately 13‰ to approximately 28‰ over 50 million years (Myr). The observed isotopic shift may have occurred more rapidly than 50 Myr (estimated to have occurred between 30–50 Myr; Fig. 2). However, given that our conclusion is that this isotope shift represents a significant geochemical perturbation, this long timespan is conservative. We suggest the data are best reproduced with a strong (2.7-fold) increase in pyrite burial (relative to the modern global burial flux), a modern continental sulfate flux, a starting marine sulfate concentration of 7 mM, and mean  $\Delta^{34}S$ value of −17‰ transiently increasing to −21‰ (Fig. S1). The sulfate  $\delta^{34}$ S values can also be reproduced with an elevated continental sulfate flux. However, with a larger continental sulfate

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flux, an increase in the global pyrite burial flux is needed to reproduce the rise in  $\delta^{34}$ S values at the tail end of the LE. For instance, a 3.2-fold increase in the global pyrite burial flux relative to the modern is needed given a transient decrease from 115% to 100% of the modern continental sulfate flux over the 50-Myr period. Model runs using very elevated continental sulfate fluxes  $(\geq 120\%$  of the modern flux), without inducing extensive gypsum burial (at least 50% modern evaporate burial), yield very high (>20 mM) marine sulfate concentrations. Marine sulfate concentrations above 20 mM are inconsistent with available estimates for the size of the marine sulfate reservoir in the mid-Paleoproterozoic (see main text).

Sensitivity tests for key model variables are shown in Fig. S2. The model is sensitive enough to pyrite burial (Fig. S2A) that the percent increase in pyrite burial can be estimated within a relatively narrow range (an increase in pyrite burial to >2.15 and <3.15 times the modern flux). However, as noted above, if the observed rise in carbonate-associated sulfate (CAS)  $\delta^{34}S$  values occurred over a shorter time period than estimated, larger increases in pyrite burial will be needed (Fig. S2A). The model is also very sensitive to the magnitude of the continental weathering flux (all other parameters being held constant)—15% changes in the magnitude of the continental sulfate flux lead to large (>5 mM) changes in the peak marine sulfate concentrations (Fig. S2B). The starting sulfate concentration makes little difference on the trajectory of the isotopic profile (Fig. S2C), but does affect the peak sulfate concentration and the sulfate concentration at the end of the event. In contrast, strong  $(>10\%)$  shifts in the  $\Delta S$  value can significantly decrease (>10 Myr) the time needed to induce the observed isotopic shift, but varying the ΔS value has no effect on the sulfate concentrations (Fig. S2D). However, there is not current evidence that global mean pyrite δ<sup>34</sup>S values varied substantially throughout the mid-Paleoproterozoic (e.g., 5).

It has been proposed that an increase in hydrothermal activity can cause an antithetic relationship in marine sulfate  $\delta^{34}S$  and carbonate  $\delta^{13}$ C records, with light  $\delta^{34}$ S values being linked to strong mantle-derived sulfur fluxes (6, 7). Although the end of the Lomagundi excursion coincides with the breakup of Kenorland and, likely, enhanced hydrothermal activity, we note that the pattern predicted by this model is opposite from what we observe in the rock record (Fig. 2). A shift to positive carbon isotope values is expected with enhanced hydrothermal activity and downward trend in S isotope values (6, 7). Given this framework, any changes in the hydrothermal S flux during the LE would require more pronounced shifts in pyrite burial at the end of the LE than we have predicted. We have not varied the hydrothermal sulfur flux in the model runs, which renders our conclusions conservative.

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Fig. S1. Overview of utilized global sulfur cycle model parameters.

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Fig. S2. Sensitivity tests for global S cycle model. We modeled a rise in the  $\delta^{34}$ S value of marine sulfate from approximately 13‰ to approximately 28‰ over 50 Myr during the end of the Lomagundi excursion. We suggest the data are best reproduced with a 2.7-fold increase in pyrite burial relative to the global modern burial flux, a modern continental sulfate flux, a starting marine sulfate concentration of 7 mM, and mean Δ<sup>34</sup>S value of −17‰ transiently increasing to  $-21$ ‰. All sensitivity tests (A–D) use these model parameters. (A) Effects of variations in the magnitude of the pyrite burial flux on the trajectory of the  $\delta^{34}S$ value rise and on the size of the global marine sulfate reservoir. (B) Effects of variations in the magnitude of the continental weathering (sulfate) flux on the trajectory of the  $\delta^{34}$ S value rise and on the size of the global marine sulfate reservoir. (C) Effects of variations in initial marine sulfate concentrations on the trajectory of the δ<sup>34</sup>S value rise and on the size of the global marine sulfate reservoir. (D) Effects of variations in pyrite fractionation factors (Δ<sup>34</sup>S values) on trajectory of the  $\delta^{34}$ S value rise and on the size of the global marine sulfate reservoir.



Fig. S3. Generalized carbonate-carbon isotope curve through time. The Lomagundi positive carbon isotope excursion is the longest and largest deviation from the near-zero δ<sup>13</sup>C values typical of carbonates throughout Earth's history. The onset of the Lomagundi excursion closely follows the initial rise in atmospheric oxygen (cf. 1). Based on the global pattern of carbon isotope values in Paleoproterozoic marine carbonates, the Lomagundi excursion likely encompassed at least two separate intervals of markedly positive  $\delta^{13}$ C values. Modified from ref. 2.

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Fig. S4. A generalized δ<sup>13</sup>C<sub>carbonate</sub> trend and available sulfate δ<sup>34</sup>S values for the ca. 2.3–2.05-billion-year (Ga) time interval. Light-grey boxes are δ<sup>34</sup>S values for sulfate evaporite (gypsum and anhydrite), and dark-grey boxes are  $\delta^{34}S_{CAS}$  data from this study. The  $\delta^{13}C_{\rm carbonate}$  curve is modified from ref. 1, and the compilation of sulfate evaporite S isotope values is from ref. 2 (also presented in Table S4). The  $\delta^{34}S_{CAS}$  values are from this study. The ages of the units (and the duration) is based on the available constraints from radiometric ages (see ref. 2) and the carbonate-carbon isotope data, relative to the idealized carbon isotope curve. 1, Gordon Lake Formation; 2, Kona Dolomite; 3, Lower Umba Formation; 4, Lucknow Formation; 5, Silverton Formation; 6, Nash Fork; 7, Delwara Formation and Jhamarkotra Formation; 8, Mcheka Formation; 9, Fedorovka Formation; 10a, Lower Albanel Formation (Lomagundi Excursion); 10b, Lower Albanel Formation (post Lomagundi Excursion)

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Fig. S5. Carbonate  $\delta^{13}$ C and  $\delta^{34}S_{CAS}$  stratigraphic trends in the (A) Kona Dolomite, United States (modified from ref. 1), and (B) Nash Fork Formation, United States (modified from ref. 2).

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2 Bekker A, Karhu JA, Eriksson KA, Kaufman AJ (2003) Chemostratigraphy of Paleoproterozoic carbonate successions of the Wyoming Craton: Tectonic forcing of biogeochemical change? Precambrian Res 120:279–325.





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#### Table S2. Proterozoic and Paleozoic CAS concentrations



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## Table S3. Estimates of marine sulfate concentrations through time



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#### Table S4. Sulfur isotope data from evaporites deposited during the Lomagundi excursion



Table after Bekker et al. (4) and Schröder et al. (16).

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